National South Asian Summit 2015

Advocacy Day

April 13, 2015

Washington, DC

Icebreakers

- Name
- Where you are from
- Why you are participating in Advocacy Day

Welcome to Advocacy Day

- Opportunity to meet with federal legislative offices and raise issues affecting the community
- Hands-on training on how to engage in advocacy
- Network with community members and advocates

Why YOU Should Participate in Advocacy Day?

- Inform Congress of the impact of executive action and racial profiling on South Asian Americans
- Influence the dialogue on these important issues
- Learn about immigration and racial profiling priorities of a particular member of Congress

What will legislative offices learn from Advocacy Day?

- The diversity and needs of South Asian community
- The relevance of executive action and impact of racial profiling on the South Asian community
- The strong, organized presence of South Asian communities nationwide

New to Advocacy? Don't Worry!

- Learn about issues today
- Advocacy training with tips
- Remember to focus on the impact of the issues for South Asians
- You know your community and experiences
- Your legislators work for you!

What We Will Discuss Today

- Logistical information
- Agenda for Advocacy Day
- Script for a legislative meeting

Schedule for Advocacy Day

- **Morning Session**
  (*Capitol Visitor Center SVC 208 -209*)
  - Congressional Briefing by Community representatives
  - Community Briefing by Government representatives
- **Afternoon Session**
  (Capitol Hill)
  - Delegation Meetings with Congressional Offices

Agenda for Advocacy Day

- 9:30AM–10:30AM
  Congressional Briefing on Immigration, Racial Profiling, and Hate Violence
- 11:00AM–12:00PM
  Briefing by Government Leaders
- 12:00PM–1:30PM
  Lunch - Delegation Organizing
- 2:00PM–4:00PM
  Individual Visits with Legislators and/or Staff

Logistics: Roles During the Meeting

- Each meeting will have a team leader, designated speakers, & a note taker
- Team Leader: Thanks the staffer, starts off discussion & leads the meeting, & closes the meeting & provides materials to the staffer
- Designated Speakers: Outline issues assigned to them in the talking points
- Note taker: Takes notes during the meeting & provides these notes to SAALT staff.

Focus 1: Executive Action

- Over 40% of the 450,000 undocumented Indians in the United States and countless more South Asians are eligible for programs under executive action
- Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and Deferred Action for Parental Accountability (DAPA) are important choices for South Asians in the United States
- DACA and DAPA cannot be eliminated or weakened
- Executive Action is an important first step toward Comprehensive Immigration Reform and we need to ensure that it moves forward without obstruction

Focus 2: Comprehensive Immigration Reform

- According to a 2015 America's Voice Poll, more than ¾ of Americans support a path to citizenship or legal status
- Currently, some states have laws supporting undocumented and all immigrant communities while others have laws that criminalize undocumented immigrants
- Without Comprehensive Immigration Reform, we will continue to have a two-tiered system that denies many immigrants basic rights and condemns them to second-class status. We need a unified system, not a patchwork of laws.

Focus 3: Racial and Religious Profiling

- Racial and religious profiling by law enforcement has proven time and again to be ineffective.
- The South Asian community has already suffered many years of racial profiling, particularly post-9/11.
- The newly revised DOJ Guidance has three exemptions for national security, border security, and state and local law enforcement that negatively affect South Asians and other communities of color nationwide.

Blueprint for a Legislative Meeting

Step 1: Introduce yourselves

Step 2: Introduce South Asian community including contributions and personal experience

Step 3: Raise issues of concern regarding immigration and racial profiling

- Focus for Immigration:
  - Executive Action
  - Comprehensive Immigration Reform

Focus for Racial and Religious Profiling

- DOJ Guidance
- End Racial Profiling Act

Blueprint for a Legislative Meeting

Step 4: Engage in a dialogue about legislator's priorities and perspectives on immigration and racial profiling & thoughts on these issues

Step 5: Return to your overarching messages

Step 6: Offer resources

Step 7: Find out main point of contact for office

Step 1: Who You Are & Why You Are There

- Thank them for meeting
- Introduce yourself & where you are from
- Mention participation in an Advocacy Day for the South Asian community
- Explain reasons for meeting:
  - Tell them about SA community
  - Raise issues of concern for SA community regarding immigration and racial profiling
  - Ask them to support executive action and Comprehensive Immigration Reform as well as the End Racial Profiling Act
  - Learn their immigration and racial profiling priorities

Step 2: Introduce the South Asian Community Generally

- South Asians come from:
  - The subcontinent: India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Maldives
  - The diaspora: Caribbean, England, Africa, Middle East, Canada
- Over 3.4 million South Asians live in the United States, approximately ¾ are foreign-born.
- South Asians have range of immigration statuses: undocumented immigrants, dependent & temporary workers on various visas, refugees & asylees, lawful permanent residents, & U.S. citizens .

Step 2: Introduce the South Asian Community in terms of Immigration

- South Asians often framed as benefiting exclusively from policies related to skilled workers or science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) graduates – this is not true.
- South Asians span a range of skill sets and immigration statuses often in the same family.
- There are currently 450,000 undocumented Indians in the United States and countless more South Asians
- *Message:* South Asians are a diverse group of people that cross various statuses and professions. There are a significant number of undocumented immigrants in our community and we all need lasting immigration reform.

Step 2: Introduce the South Asian Community in terms of Immigration

South Asian Americans are affected by Executive Action

- Over 40% of the 450,000 undocumented Indians and countless more South Asians qualify for DACA and DAPA
- The first successful rule under the President's executive action expanding work authorization for some H-4 dependent spouses benefitted many South Asians.
  - In 2013, over 75% of those who received H-4 status were from South Asian countries
- Encouraging that Secure Communities has been replaced with the Priority Enforcement Program, ending mandatory detentions
  - Under Secure Communities, the majority of those deported did not fir the stated priorities for enforcement. South Asians were likely to be stopped and have their status checked at disproportionate frequency.

Step 3: Raise Issues of Concern & Make Your Ask

Focus 1: Executive Action

- There have been recent attempts in Congress to derail DACA and DAPA
  - The first was the Department of Homeland Security Appropriations Act earlier this year
  - The second was the recent Senate Budget Resolution
  - Versions of these bills attempted to deny DACA and DAPA recipients eligibility for the Child Tax Credit, Earned Income Tax Credit, Medicare, and Social Security as well as reinstate Secure Communities

Step 3: Raise Issues of Concern & Ask

Focus 1: Executive Action

- *Ask:* Will you continue to support DACA and DAPA and help ensure sure that legislation intended to weaken or eliminate executive action is defeated once and for all?
- *Message:* Executive Action is an important first step toward Comprehensive Immigration Reform.

Step 3: Raise Issues of Concern & Ask

Focus 2: Comprehensive Immigration Reform

- Currently, some states have law supporting undocumented and all immigrant communities while others have laws criminalizing undocumented immigrants
  - State laws that expand opportunities for immigrants allow undocumented residents access to drivers licenses and affordable higher education
  - State laws that criminalize include SB 1070 in Arizona and the copycat laws in other states that racially profile and target immigrants for deportation
- Without Comprehensive Immigration Reform, we will continue to have a patchwork of immigration policies
- We support a bill that clears our unacceptably long visa backlogs and continues to raise the visa caps so that our family members can join us here

Step 3: Raise Issues of Concern & Ask

Focus 2: Comprehensive Immigration Reform

- *Ask:* Will you support Comprehensive Immigration Reform?
- *Message:* Comprehensive Immigration Reform is the only viable long-term option
  - It will unify our immigration policies
  - It will protect all immigrants
  - It will expand our nation's economy and our future

Step 3: Raise Issues of Concern & Make Your Ask

Focus 3: Racial and Religious Profiling

- Racial profiling by law enforcement has proven time and again to be ineffective. It deters South Asians from reporting crimes, sharing information, or serving as witnesses.
- The South Asian community has already suffered many years of racial profiling, particularly post-9/11, which has furthered stereotypes about South Asians and pushed community members into the shadows.
- The newly revised DOJ Guidance has three exemptions for national security, border security, and state and local law enforcement that negatively affect South Asians and other communities of color.

Step 3: Raise Issues of Concern & Ask

Focus 3: Racial and Religious Profiling

- *Ask:* Will you continue to highlight the problematic exemptions to the DOJ Guidance? Will you support the End Racial Profiling Act?
- *Message:* Racial and religious profiling by law enforcement must end
  - We must improve relationships between law enforcement and South Asian communities
  - We need to respond to hate violence targeting our communities

Step 4: Engage in a Dialogue

- Ask them what their immigration and racial profiling priorities are
- Ask them what their positions are on executive action, Comprehensive Immigration Reform, and the End Racial Profiling Act
- If they can't give you a response, ask them when they will know and if SAALT can follow-up to find out

Step 5: Return to Your Overarching Messages

- Executive Action must move forward without obstruction and we need Comprehensive Immigration Reform.
- The DOJ Guidance continues to have problematic loopholes.
- We must pass the End Racial Profiling Act.

Step 6: Offer Resources

- **Team Leader gives blue folder to staffer with:**
  - About SAALT
  - Demographic information on South Asian community
  - Factsheet on executive action
  - DACA stories
  - SAALT Press: (1) H-4 statement; and, (2) OpEd in NBC News (3) DOJ Guidance statement
  - Copy of "Under Suspicion, Under Attack"
  - SAALT business cards
- **Offer to provide additional follow-up materials that staffer might request such as**
  - Organizational materials for additional background
  - List of community organizations and leaders they can meet with

Step 7: Point of Contact

- Ask them if their district office staff works closely with the South Asian community
- Ask them whom you can be in touch with in their district office if you have further questions or issues to raise

Materials & Resources For You

- You will be provided with:
  - Advocacy Day Schedule
  - Delegation assignments
  - Delegation visit script
  - Backgrounder on the Member of Congress
  - Capitol Hill map & Visitor Center map

Tips for Delegation Meetings

- Arrive five to ten minutes early
- Attire: business / professional
- Disagreeing is fine, so long as we remain polite and professional
- It's ok to not know the answer – just tell them you will get back to them & return to your talking points

Question & Answer

Mock Meeting Exercise Instructions

- Step 1: Divided into small groups
  - One person will play the role of the legislator
  - Others will play the roles of constituents
- Step 2: Review your talking points and recommendations; determine who will cover which issues and include any pertinent community stories (5 minutes)
- Step 3: Practice introducing yourself and raising the issues (15 minutes)
- Step 4: Feedback (5 minutes)

Just Remember!

- Share your personal stories, experiences, and concerns
- Ask questions of your legislator
- Complete the report-back form
- Have fun!

Contact Information

Lakshmi Sridaran
SAALT Director of National Policy and Advocacy
lakshmi@saalt.org
(415) 264-2494

Please contact me:

- If something changes & you cannot attend
- If you have additional questions or concerns
- If you have any issues on Advocacy Day!